Thom, David. 1825.
Academical contemporanei
don: Ded:
D Thom
D.D. Ph.D.

MEMORIAL

BY THE

REV. DAVID THOM,

REGARDING THE

THEOLOGICAL POINTS OF HIS CASE.

SECOND EDITION.

X849, Dec 31
Life of the author
of Everard

Pamphlet Collection
Duke Divinity School

MEMORIAL

SUBMITTED BY

THE REV. DAVID THOM,

TO THE

PRESBYTERY OF GLASGOW,

In the Cause between JOHN M'CULLOCH, and others, and himself.

THE Memorialist considers the following exposition of his sentiments due both to the Presbytery and to himself. To the Presbytery—as the only clue that can enable them to find their way through a labyrinth of conflicting and irreconcileable testimonies; and to himself—as he conceives himself best qualified to state what his own views in regard to doctrinal matters are. He did not see, indeed, that it would be doing himself justice, to leave the Presbytery to gather his sentiments from the misrepresentations or absurd statements of interested or ignorant witnesses. At the same time, considering that Divinity was a field of immense extent, and that the discussions to which every department of it might give rise were almost interminable, he found it necessary to reduce his exposition to as concise a form as possible. Nothing struck him as being so well adapted for this purpose, as delivering his sentiments upon each article charged, in the shape of a series of propositions, or theses, founded upon generally acknowledged maxims, growing out of each other, and having a direct reference to the proof taken in his case, adducing occasionally, as seemed to be necessary, the grounds upon which these propositions rested, and the evidence, Scriptural or otherwise, by which they appeared to him to be supported. The time which he has had for accomplishing this has been so exceedingly

limited,—perhaps more so than may be imagined,—that he hopes the Reverend Presbytery will kindly overlook, and excuse, any inaccuracies that may have escaped him—any irrelevant matter that he may have introduced—and any repetitions with which he may appear to be chargeable.

I. *Means of Grace.*

PROP. 1st. Without the Means of Grace, that is to say, without hearing the Gospel preached, or reading the Scriptures, or having the Truth as it is in Jesus brought before the mind in some other way, there can be no salvation. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts iv. 12. Rom. x. 14—17. Con. of Faith, chap. x. sec. 4. chap. xiv. sec. 1. Short. Cat. ques. 29, 30, 85. Larg. Cat. ques. 60.

2d. It is not by the use of these Means of Grace, but by the atonement of Christ, revealed in and applied * by them, that the sinner is saved. Scriptures *passim*. Con. of Faith, chap. xvi. sec. 5.

3d. Due care therefore must be had, that the Means of Grace be not allowed to usurp the place due to the Object of Grace.

4th. All the commands of God are obligatory upon his creatures. It is surely unnecessary to set about proving a proposition so self-evident as this—the obligation of which we speak arising from, and being founded upon, the relation which the Creator and his creatures bear to each other.

5th. The commands to trust, pray, read the Scriptures, and, in one word, to obey God, being addressed to men as God's creatures, are therefore obligatory upon them.

6th. It is the duty of a Christian minister, to enforce upon all his hearers compliance with all God's commandments.

7th. Guilt is incurred by disobedience to any of, or all God's commandments. Short. Cat. ques. 84.

8th. It is clear that the character of God can only become known, in consequence of a revelation of it by himself.

9th. Although certain parts of the character of God, such as his eternal power and Godhead, are revealed in the works of nature and otherwise, the only full, entire, and satisfactory revelation of the divine character, is contained in the Holy Scriptures.

10th. The sum and substance of the Scriptures is, to reveal and bear testimony to Christ. Rev. xix. 10.

11th. One grand reason of this is, that in the person, mission,

* *Instrumentally*, it being the work of the Spirit to apply it *efficiently*.

work, and atonement of Christ, it was the purpose of God to give a full and clear display of his character; and therefore, in Christ and in his work, all the attributes and perfections of God, which he will ever condescend to reveal to his creatures, being combined and displayed, to become acquainted with the person, mission, work, and atonement of Christ, is to obtain the fullest acquaintance with the divine character that ever can be got.

12th. If God has commanded men to believe in his character, as revealed in Scripture in general, and in the person, &c. of Christ, in whom that character is displayed in particular, this command is, of course, like every other, obligatory upon them.

13th. God has issued such a command; surely it is unnecessary to offer the slightest proof of this.

14th. It is evident, that as the divine character can only be known, in consequence of having been revealed,—and as the only true and full revelation of the divine character is contained in Scripture,—therefore, he who is ignorant of, or has not believed in, the divine character as therein revealed, must be entertaining false and erroneous notions concerning it.

15th. Still farther: whatever worship a person thus ignorant and unbelieving may present, or by whatever acts of obedience he may be distinguished, it is evident that they cannot be presented to, nor performed for the sake of, the God of Revelation, with whom, by the terms of the supposition, he is unacquainted; but must be presented to, and performed for the sake of, a creature or idol of his own imagination.

16th. Upon the supposition of God having pledged himself only to accept of worship presented to, and of obedience performed for the sake of himself, it follows, that the services of a person thus ignorant and unbelieving, cannot find acceptance with him. This is quite agreeable to the standards of the Church of Scotland, by which we are taught, that nothing done by men, so long as they continue unregenerate, is, or can be, well pleasing in the sight of God. Con. of Faith, chap. ix. sec. 3. chap. x. sec. 2. chap. xvi. sec. 7.* It may be farther remarked, that the standards always mean by unregenerate men, those who have not believed on the name of the Son of God, or, in other words, those who have not credited the revelation which God has given of himself.

17th. The knowledge of, and belief in the divine character, being thus, as appears, indispensable to all acceptable worship and obedience, it was necessary that God, in order to qualify his creatures for worshipping and obeying him, should first of all reveal to them his character, and command them to believe in it.

* See also the Thirteenth Article of the Church of England.

18th. This was necessary, evidently for this additional reason also, that if it constituted a part of the character of God, to accept of worship and obedience presented to, and performed for the sake of himself, of course, he to whom this part of the divine character was not revealed, and by whom it was not believed in, wanted every inducement and encouragement to perform such worship and obedience. Heb. xi. 6.

19th. Thus does it appear to have been necessary, that God should reveal his character to men, and command them to believe in it, not necessarily *antecedent to*, or *separate from*, other commands, but, at all events, *along with* them, and as the only means of enabling them to be obeyed.

20th. To express myself perhaps a little more plainly; it seems to follow necessarily from all the preceding statements, that in all divine commands—excepting, of course, that to believe—a revelation of the divine character, and a command to believe in it, is, if not formally expressed, at least implied, and that all God's commandments, therefore, come home to his creatures attended with a sufficient intimation from whom they proceed, and on what grounds, consequently, they are obligatory upon them.

21st. Perhaps still more plainly; every command of God, either more or less directly includes in it, and is accompanied by, a revelation of his character, in which the sinner is commanded to believe, and by believing which alone, he comes to know the right which God has to demand obedience, and is furnished with suitable motives for the performance of it.

22d. Whatever God reveals as his character, must be believed in.

23d. Supposing God to follow up an obscurer revelation of himself, with one fuller and more distinct, accompanying each with a command to believe in it, we are equally bound to believe both; nor will our having believed in the former, set us free in the slightest degree from our obligation to believe also in he latter, so soon as made known to us.

24th. All preceding revelations of the divine character are now merged in, and superseded by the Gospel, and therefore a declaration of the Gospel, or of the way of salvation through Christ Jesus, and of the command of God to believe in it, does now, either less or more, directly accompany every other divine command, and it is only by believing in it, that other divine commands can be obeyed.

25th. To bring the whole matter then to a point, ministers ought to enforce obedience to all God's commands upon unbelievers, as well as upon those who have believed the Gospel: but it is to be remembered, that these commands cannot be obeyed by the former class, so long as they continue unbelievers, and

therefore, when the commands are issued and enforced, such persons are to be carefully instructed in the revealed character of God, whose commands they are, and are likewise to be informed, that belief in this is the only way in which they can obey, and in which their obedience can be acceptable to God.

26th. To be more particular; although ministers are bound to enforce prayer, reading the Scriptures, attendance upon ordinances, &c. on all their auditors, whether believers or unbelievers, these duties cannot be enforced on the latter class, on the supposition of its being possible for them to perform them in their character of unbelievers; nor can ministers exhort unbelievers to lay aside their sins *before* believing in Christ, as this would, according to the principles already laid down, be exhorting them to perform an impossibility, besides contradicting the nature of the Gospel, the salvation of which is unconditional, in which God is represented as justifying, not the godly, but the ungodly, as calling, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance, and which does not expect to *find* men good, but *makes* them so.

27th. To believe in God as he is revealed in Scripture, being thus a divine command, by disobedience to it, as well as by disobedience to other divine commands, guilt is incurred.

28th. Greater guilt is incurred by unbelief, than by all other crimes, John iii. 19, and elsewhere, and therefore at the great day, a sentence of a more awful kind shall be pronounced upon those who have been chargeable with it, than upon others.

29th. The greater heinousness of unbelief, does not appear to consist in any thing peculiar to it, as a *command of* God, *all* his commands being equally obligatory upon his creatures, but, 1st, In its being a more direct affront put upon, and a more direct insult offered to, the sovereign majesty, and infinite veracity of God, 1 John v. 10; 2dly, In its utter disabling him who is guilty of it, from the performance of all other duties; and 3dly, In the base ingratitude to God, and utter recklessness of our own everlasting well-being, which it manifests.

Having laid down these positions, I would just simply observe, that they all appear to me founded on Scripture, and on the standards of the church. In proof of this let the following passages of both be consulted: Deut. xviii. 19. Psalm ii. 12. Matt. xvii. 5. Mark xvi. 16. John iii. 16—18, 36. John vi. 29. 1 John iii. 23. Acts iii. 22. Acts xvi. 31. Acts xxii. 14—16. Rom. iv. 4, 5. Rom. ix. 30, *ad finem*. Con. of Faith, chap. xvi. sec. 2, 3, 6, 7.—chap. xi. sec. 1, 2.—chap. iii. sec. 6.—chap. vii. sec. 3.—chap. viii. sec. 8.—chap. x. sec. 1. Short. Cat. ques. 85. where, as well as in all the rest, faith is represented as the first grace.

II. *Faith.*

SINCE the period of the blessed Reformation, one of the most interesting controversies that has occupied the attention of divines, and of the church of Christ, has been, whether trust in God, springing from, and founded upon, the knowledge of our own personal interest in his salvation, is, or is not, of the essence of justifying faith.

On this subject the learned and judicious OWEN has the following remarks, in his well known and highly esteemed work *on Justification:* "Whether this trust or confidence, shall be esteemed of the essence of faith, or as that which on the first fruit, and working of it, we are found in the exercise of, we need not particularly determine, I place it, therefore, as that which belongs unto justifying faith, and is inseparable from it. For if all we have spoken before concerning faith, may be comprised under the notion of a firm assent and persuasion, yet it cannot be so, if any such assent be conceivable exclusive of this trust." *London Edit.* 1816, *page* 88.

Of the same sentiments with this celebrated author, appear to have been the Westminster divines, to whose united labours we owe our Confession of Faith, and Catechisms. They perceived clearly, from the revealed character of God, the constitution of the human mind, and the experience of all those who had become acquainted with the saving truth, that it was impossible to separate trust or confidence from the faith of the Gospel. Hence it is, that into all their definitions or descriptions of saving faith, trust, or resting upon, is introduced as a part. But the same accuracy of views, and extent of theological knowledge, enabled them to perceive, that as God no where in his word declares, that such and such an individual shall be saved,—and as faith, in a *divine testimony*, can have respect merely to what *is testified*,—of course, assurance of personal salvation, or trust in God, on the ground of our own particular interest in the blessings promised, cannot have place in the direct act of faith, or in that process of mind by which we *credit the divine testimony*. On this ground it was, that while they admitted assurance of personal interest to flow from justification, and even admitted trust on that account into their definitions of saving faith, as inseparable from it, they rejected it from being of the essence of faith.

Thus it is that I am satisfied with, and desire no other account of faith, than what is given in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism—"Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the

Gospel." In this description or definition, we have five things. 1st, That faith is a grace, or production of the Holy Spirit. 2d, That it is connected with salvation. 3d, That it receives, that is, according to John i. 12. from which the figurative language is taken, believes on Jesus Christ. 4th, That it produces trust or confidence in him, as our own personal Saviour, this trust or confidence not being of the essence of faith, according to chapter 18th of the Confession, and yet accompanying or flowing from it, according to question 34th of the Shorter Catechism. And 5thly, The ground or warrant of our believing, viz. the divine record, in which Christ is set forth, offered, or presented to all who believe on his name.

Such are the views which I entertain upon this subject, and these, I now proceed, at somewhat more length, to open up, and develope. Authors of acknowledged authority will be referred to, in proof of my positions.

1st. All faith or belief is in itself simply the assent of the understanding, to truth made known upon testimony, see Dr. ERSKINE'S Theological Dissertations, No. 3. Prof. CAMPBELL of Aberdeen, Preliminary Dissertations, pages 169 and 170, *Aberdeen Edition*, 1803.

2d. The only two kinds of testimony of which we can form any conception, are, the testimony of men, and the testimony of God, each of which, when understood, will produce an assent or acquiescence, suitable to its nature. OWEN, in his work on Justification, says, " All faith is an assent upon testimony, and divine faith is an assent upon a divine testimony," page 60, *ut supra*. Prof. HALYBURTON'S Reason of Faith. See also a very interesting paragraph in the works of RICCALTOUN of Hobkirk, volume 2d, page 188, Edition 1772, beginning " when one has said," &c.

3d. It is evident, that in the case of divine testimony, if the character of the Testifier, as a being incapable of practising deception, or of being deceived himself, be revealed and understood,—and if his testimony be accompanied with sufficient evidence that it comes from him,—whenever the testimony is understood, an unhesitating and unwavering assent, or, in other words, a complete and absolute certainty, or assurance, of the truth of what is testified, will be the result.

4th. It is equally evident, that human beings, labouring under the possibility of being deceived themselves, or of intending to deceive others, in what they testify, belief in what comes to us upon their authority can never amount to absolute certainty, or assurance, but must always admit of degrees.

5th. The impression produced upon our minds by any testimony

or report, is always in proportion to our conviction, 1st, of its truth, and 2dly, of the interest which we have in it.

6th. That report, of the falsehood of which we are satisfied, or in which we are no way whatever concerned, will produce upon our minds no impression at all; whereas it is absolutely impossible, from the constitution of the human mind, that we should not be impressed or affected, either in a greater or less degree, by a report, which we are satisfied is, or may be true, and in which we are somehow or other interested.

7th. If that which is revealed upon divine authority, besides being necessarily true, particularly concern us, it must, when believed, from the very constitution of the human mind, produce upon us a deep and powerful impression.

8th. It follows from all this, as a corollary, that if the glad tidings of salvation by Christ Jesus be believed, a certain impression upon the mind will necessarily be made, and certain other effects will necessarily be produced; and on the other hand, where these are a wanting, the Gospel is not believed.

9th. It does *not* follow from all this, that is to say, from certain effects being necessarily connected with believing the Gospel, that faith, in the Scriptural sense of the term, is any thing more than the assent of the understanding to truth, revealed upon divine testimony, no more than it follows from effects in other cases always accompanying their respective causes, that causes and effects are one and the same thing.

10th. It is to be observed, that in Revelation, words are employed exactly in the same sense, in which they are employed among men, in their ordinary intercourse with each other, and, therefore, the difficulty of comprehending divine things lies, not in the terms in which they are spoken of, but in the things themselves.

11th. The reason for which belief in human testimony admits of degrees, viz. the fallibility and deceitfulness of man, is the reason for which we frequently meet with the conflicting and opposite testimonies of men, with regard to the same subject, and is also the reason for which, what was believed by us at one time upon human testimony, may afterwards come to be disbelieved by us upon contrary, and what is conceived by us to be stronger, human testimony.

12th. What has once stood true to the mind, upon divine testimony, can never afterwards come to be disbelieved by us, because, 1st, God cannot contradict himself, and 2dly, No human authority is of any avail against the authority of God; and, therefore, if any man who once professed to believe in Revelation, should afterwards profess to disbelieve it, it merely proves, that

he had never received it upon the testimony and authority of God, the Testifier, and that if he ever yielded his assent to it, or to any part of it, or fancied that he had done so, it was upon some inferior authority.

13th. If we believe, it must be in consequence of having heard, and recognized, the voice of God, speaking directly to us in the Scriptures—that is to say, our sole and simple reason for believing any thing upon divine authority, must be a *Thus saith the Lord*—or our regarding God himself, as the only competent witness to his own existence and truth; otherwise, our faith must, after all, rest merely upon the authority of the creature, and our obedience be directed towards a being inferior to God himself. See Confession of Faith, chap. i. sec. 4, &c.

14th. This implies that God must have some peculiar and direct way of making himself known to us, or, in other words, that an evidence must accompany and prove the truth of his word, totally distinct from all that evidence of intuition, reasoning, and sense, by which we yield our assent to truth proposed to us upon human authority. If this be not supposed and admitted, it resolves our faith in God's word into human authority after all, because it makes us to perceive its truth, upon evidence common to it with mere human writings and propositions, an effort to which mere natural characters are fully competent; and which, if allowed to be all that is requisite, does away with the necessity of the influences of the Holy Spirit altogether. See this subject treated, in his usual masterly manner, by Halyburton, in his "Reason of Faith."

15th. To bring the truth, as it is in Jesus, before the mind, with the peculiar evidence just spoken of, and thereby to seal it upon the heart and conscience, is the peculiar office and work of the Holy Spirit in conversion.

16th. I would not have it supposed from this, that the Holy Spirit merely places the truth, with its own peculiar evidence, before the mind, and leaves the mind itself to perform the task of believing; no—for this would be to make salvation, after all, not of grace, but of works. On the contrary, the same Spirit who places the truth before the mind, also opens the eyes of the understanding to perceive it, and thereby, and then, commences that new creation, which is to the believer the earnest of everlasting glory. In the whole process of believing, the mind is perfectly passive, (Con. of Faith, chap. x. sec. 2.) and thus is verified that scriptural declaration, "*that Faith is the gift of God.*" Eph. ii. 8.

17th. The moment the saving truth has been believed, the mind remains no longer passive; but active exertion, and all the fruits

and effects of spiritual life, are immediately brought forth and displayed.

18th. This faith is so necessarily connected with salvation, that none who have thus believed can come short of the heavenly glory. See the chapters of the Confession of Faith, upon saving faith, and on the perseverance of the saints.

19th. When the saving truth, attended with that peculiar evidence which makes manifest both its author and itself, is present to the mind; or, in other words, when it is believed, the mind must be conscious that it is so present, or so believed. To deny this, would be to maintain, that it is possible for the mind to be unconscious of its own operations.

20th. As part of the divine record, or testimony concerning Christ, is, that he who believeth shall be saved, it therefore follows, that the man, who, according to the preceding proposition, is satisfied of his believing, must also be satisfied of his salvation, or of his personal interest in Christ.

21st. This explains the way in which "assurance of God's love," and "peace of conscience," are, according to the terms of the 34th question of the Shorter Catechism, made to flow from, or accompany justification, &c.; and also explains the way in which trust, which is the result of assurance of God's love, although declared not to be essential to the direct act of believing, is nevertheless made to enter into, and form a part of, the definitions of saving faith.

22d. Assurance of God's love, and trust in him as the consequence thereof, being thus intimately and necessarily connected with believing, or rather with the truth believed; that is to say, being in themselves principles incapable of subsisting independently of the saving truth; it follows, that if the saving truth be not for the time present to the mind, or, in other words, be not remembered, it is impossible that assurance of God's love can, while the truth is so absent, exist or be maintained.

23d. It would be absurd to expect from those who are in a state of insanity, from those who have not been accustomed to accuracy of thought or reasoning, or from those, who, to a certain degree, labour under erroneous views of the subject, even although they may believe the Gospel, a very distinct account of their experience in regard to the article of assurance of God's love.

24th. By perceiving that assurance of God's love, and trust founded thereon, although necessarily connected with, and flowing from, are yet not of the essence of faith, or, in other words, do not constitute part of the record which the unregenerate sinner is commanded *in the first place* to believe, the framers of our standards have proved themselves to have been well acquainted

with the doctrine of scripture in general, and of Romans viii. 15, 16. and of 1 John v. 10. in particular, upon the subject. It being, not in consequence of an unwarranted and enthusiastic idea, that we are the children of God, but in consequence of our own spirits, or consciousness, testifying to us that we believe the divine record, and this, accompanied by the peculiar witnessing of the Holy Spirit, in and by the divine record, to our consciences, that we are satisfied or assured of our being the children of God.

25th. This assurance of God's love being implanted by the Spirit of God, must, in itself, be a purifying and a sanctifying principle; and, therefore, any pretenders to this assurance, in whose hearts, and over whose lives, it is not exerting a purifying influence, are deceiving themselves, are yet ignorant of the gospel, and have, as yet, neither part nor lot in the great salvation. In order, however, to guard against, what to natural men may appear to be the licentious tendency of the doctrine of assurance, we are not permitted to diminish its certainty, or to render it conditional. A conditional assurance, it must be obvious to every man of common sense, is a contradiction in terms—is no assurance at all. If assurance be a doctrine of the word of God, which our standards assert it to be, it must be of a purifying nature, all God's words being pure; and therefore it follows, however paradoxical the proposition may appear, that men fall into sin, not because they have too much, but because they have too little assurance, or rather, to speak more plainly, because they have no assurance, that is to say, no faith at all. Assurance is good for every thing, or it is good for nothing; if the latter, let it be discarded at once; but let us not attempt to improve it, by making it what it is not, or expose our ignorance of ordinary language, and our want of common sense, by making certainty and uncertainty, assurance and want of assurance, to mean one and the same thing. Upon this subject of assurance, some admirable remarks will be found in Archbishop Leighton on Peter, particularly on the 1st chapter. Admirably, likewise, says the Con. of Faith, chap. 18. sec. 2: "This certainty is *not a bare conjectural, and probable persuasion*, grounded upon a fallible hope, *but an infallible assurance of faith*, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation," &c.

26th. As faith or belief is that principle of mind which has respect to a testimony as true, and hope to some good thing yet in prospect, it therefore obviously follows, that there is a distinction between the principles of divine faith and divine hope. The one regards God's testimony as certainly, infallibly, or assuredly true; the other looks forward with certainty to the enjoyment of the blessings promised in the testimony. A man's consciousness that

he believes the gospel, or his assurance of God's love to himself, and consequent trust in him,—which we have shown necessarily accompanies faith,—is not, as some have absurdly maintained, the assurance of hope, there being no *futurity* in the case—but, on the contrary, a present blessing enjoyed—it, or rather the testimony believed, is, however, the foundation upon which the assurance of hope rests.

27th. The sum of what has been said upon this subject of faith then is, that faith, in a divine testimony, is assurance, that is to say, is a certainty in the mind of the divine testimony being true; this assurance is accompanied with an assurance of God's love to us in particular, and consequent trust in him; and upon these graces are founded, and from them are derived, all the other graces of Christianity.

I would beg leave to close what I have to say upon the subject of faith, by remarking, that, when it is considered that Protestant Divines have, since the era of the Reformation, been disputing whether trust or confidence in God, springing from a sense of his love to us in particular, enters into the essence of saving faith;—and when, even in our own Church, in the case of the Marrow controversy, and at other times, men distinguished for their piety, learning, and theological attainments, have been found ranging themselves on both sides of the question, and appealing to our standards, as well as to the scriptures, in proof of the correctness of their respective opinions;—I say, when this is considered, I account it extremely hard, that it should have been deemed by the Presbytery a sufficient ground of accusation against me, that I had taken either the one side of the question or the other. What though I should have declared it as my opinion, that assurance of God's love does enter into the essence of saving faith? Who, in that case, could have proved me to be wrong? What would have been made of those definitions of saving faith in our present standards, into which trust, founded upon the knowledge of personal interest, is made to enter as a constituent part? What of the reiterated protests of this Church, against "*the general and doubtsome faith of the papists?*" What of the doctrine contained in the Confession of faith, 1560? Of the opinions of those worthies by whom our church was founded? Of the language of Craig's Catechism, sanctioned by the Church, especially question and answer 22d, where faith is declared to be "a sure persuasion that Christ is the only Saviour of the world, but our's in special, who believe in him?" What of the sentiments of the immortal Luther, and of many others of that glorious band of Brothers, by whom the Reformation was introduced? But I have done. Whatever may be thought or said upon the subject, one thing is

clear, that he who can *separate* assurance of God's love to us in particular, from saving faith, may call himself a Protestant if he pleases; but, assuredly, he cherishes in his bosom one of the worst features, and one of the most demoralizing principles of Popery. It is impossible that a *Protestant* tribunal can condemn me; but if, contrary to my expectations, I am doomed to suffer, this consolation, at least, I shall have, that the condemnation will attach not to me singly, but to some of the brightest names that have adorned the Church of God.

III. *Repentance.*

ALTHOUGH the entertaining of erroneous views, in regard to this subject, does not constitute one of the charges against me, and although, consequently, the Presbytery are not entitled to pronounce any judgment on this point; yet, that my defence may not be incomplete, and that all misrepresentations may, in so far as I can, be removed, I subjoin a few explanatory propositions on this subject likewise. Before proceeding to do so, however, I would just take notice, that in the course of the *two years* I have been among them, my congregation have had three distinct sermons on this very topic of Repentance, besides numerous occasional references to it. The texts were, Acts ii. 37, Acts xx. 21, and Luke xxiv. 47. And the occasions were, Sabbath, July 26th, 1823,—by the way, I see that I continued the same subject on the two following Sabbaths,—Sabbath, April 18th, 1824, and Sabbath, July 10th, 1825.

1st. The literal acceptation of Μετανοια, the Greek word commonly used for repentance in the New Testament, is simply, *change of mind*, or, *change of views*. Dr. CAMPBELL, in his invaluable preliminary Dissertations, considers, that there is contained in the word, the additional idea of the change being lasting, and that it thus stands distinguished from Μεταμελεια, the other Greek word translated repentance. To this, I can have no objection.

2d. This radical meaning, change of mind, necessarily implying, and accompanied by, a corresponding change of conduct, runs through all the acceptations in which the word for repentance is taken, and all the passages in which it occurs in the New Testament.

3d. Belief and change of mind, or faith and repentance, are in all cases inseparably connected together. That is to say—when I come to know and believe concerning any person or object, that of which I was previously ignorant, and did not believe concerning

that person or object, of course my mind, views, or opinions, in regard to that person or object, are changed; and if this change of views be on a subject in which I am particularly interested, of course a change of conduct also, in so far at least as that subject is concerned, will be the result. Take the following familiar example of what I mean. Suppose me,—whether upon sufficient grounds, or the reverse, it matters not to my argument,—suppose me to regard a man as my enemy, in that case, I act towards him as such; but suppose me to discover, or (which is the same thing,) to fancy I have discovered him to be my friend, this new belief is accompanied necessarily with, or perhaps, more simply, really is, a changed view of his character, and implies a change also in my behaviour towards him. Thus inseparably are faith and repentance united.

4th. The belief of the Gospel is productive of, or, more simply, rather is, the greatest revolution, the greatest change of views, which the human mind can undergo. An entire change of views in regard to the character of God, the foundation of hope, and the nature and principles of obedience, is its immediate and necessary result. The believer now perceiving sin, in the cross of Christ, to be exceeding sinful, and yet at the same time, through the same medium, apprehending the mercy of God in Christ, is led to entertain very different views of sin from what he did before, is filled with grief, loathing, and self-abhorrence, on account of his previous transgressions, and with a determination, in the strength of divine grace, to be found walking thereafter in the paths of new obedience. In this way he repents, that is to say, his views of divine truth, and of his own character and conduct, are entirely changed; and this change of views is just as inseparable from the faith of the Gospel, and a renewed obedience, as light and heat are from the rays of the sun.

5th. This change of views and of conduct, or this repentance, is the work of the Holy Spirit, and is necessarily connected with salvation.

6th. This repentance, or this change of views, can only take place once; but besides this great repentance, or this great change of views and conduct, which takes place when the Gospel is for the first time believed, the believer is in a subordinate sense repenting continually, whilst upon earth. He is always, in consequence of additional light from divine truth shining in upon his mind, discovering the erroneous nature of sentiments and the inconsistency of practices which for a time he held, and in which for a time he indulged; and in so far as he turns from these, to correcter sentiments and practices, as soon as their error and inconsistency are discovered, he may be said, in so far, to repent.

Every change he makes from worse to better, is a species of repentance. It is indeed the nature of divine truth, when discovered, always to leave the individual who discovers it uneasy, until it has been allowed to produce its genuine influence upon his heart, life, and conduct.

IV. *The Two Natures.*

Upon this subject, although in itself a most copious one, it is not my intention greatly to enlarge. I expect to be able to imbody in a few propositions, all that is necessary for an explanation of my views in regard to it. Those who are desirous to obtain additional information on the subject, may, besides consulting the Westminster Confession of Faith, peruse the 13th Article of the Confession of Faith of the Scottish National Church, A. D. 1560, entitled, " Of the cause of good works," and the ninth Article of the Church of England, entitled, " Of original, or birth sin." Besides these, my views will, in a great measure, be found expressed in the very learned and judicious work of Mr. Frazer of Allness, on " Sanctification," and likewise in the works of the ingenious Riccaltoun of Hobkirk, especially in his " Treatise on the general plan of Revelation," and his essay entitled " The Christian Life," &c. See particularly the paragraph, page 59, beginning, " What I chuse first," &c.—the paragraph, page 124, beginning, " There was one thing our Lord was most remarkable in," &c.—the following one, pages 125 and 126, beginning, " What our blessed pattern," &c.—that at page 132, beginning, " By what we were just now," &c.—page 147, " But had the promise," &c.—page 172, " And as he was thus the great," &c.—page 176, to the end of the chapter,—paragraph, page 194, *ad finem*, —the Christian Life, page 216,—but especially page 220, which I quote at full length, (the edition quoted is 1772.) " In that intermediate station wherein the Spirit of God abides in the Christian, while yet he continues in the flesh, the body he derived from Adam, *we have the two very different lives derived from the first and second man, subsisting in some sort together in the same person.* The soul of man, once dead to God and the spiritual and eternal world, buried in sense, and enslaved to all sensual and worldly lusts, cravings, and appetites, now restored to its proper life by Jesus Christ, becomes capable of its proper business, to live as a spirit should do ; while yet Adam's life remains in these bodies, and all the base and low appetites and passions belonging to it, *never to be rooted out, until these corruptible*

bodies put on incorruption, and mortality be swallowed up of life. Thus then the case stands—by our first birth as children of Adam, we are born into this world, and good for nothing else; by the Spirit restored in the new birth, we are brought into the spiritual world, and become the children of God by Jesus Christ; but our relation to the first Adam, and our connexions with this his world, are never broken, until these bodies return to the dust from which they were originally taken; and when these shall be raised up, and not till then, the mystery of God will be finished, in their perfect union with, and conformity to, their glorious Head. But just so far as any man comes to be united and alive to Christ, just so far is he disjoined from, and dead to Adam." Let the following paragraphs, also, be carefully perused.

I now proceed to state my views on the subject of the two natures, in a series of propositions.

1st. Adam and Christ are the respective Heads of two distinct posterities: the former of the whole human race, the latter of his church, or of such of the human race as are saved by him.

2d. As there is a natural generation or birth, by which the whole human race are brought into the world: so there is a spiritual regeneration or new birth, by which the heirs of salvation, or the purchase of Christ's blood, are brought out of the world, and become members of his family.

3d. As it is agreeable to the established constitution of things, that in generation, the being producing communicates his nature to the being produced, so Adam communicates his nature to his posterity, and Christ his nature to his posterity, 1 Cor. xv. 48, "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly."

4th. The nature of Adam having been by the fall thoroughly depraved, nothing of course but a depraved nature can be the lot of his descendants; and, on the other hand, the nature of Christ being pure, holy, and heavenly, therefore purity, holiness, &c. and nothing else, are derived by his descendants from him, John iii. 6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

5th. It may first be proper to state again, distinctly and explicitly, that the pure, holy, and heavenly nature of Christ is first communicated from him to his people when they believe, and by believing on his name, see John i. 13, James i. 18, 1 Pet. i. 3, 23, &c.

6th. Adam, *as the head of his natural posterity*, having been possessed of nothing superior to a mere natural and animal life, however perfect for a time that life was, it was utterly impossible that a *spiritual life* could flow from him to them, 1 Cor. xv. 45.

"And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul," &c.—see also verse 48, already quoted.

7th. If in the bestowing of natural life upon Adam at first, and likewise in the bestowing of it upon each of his posterity, God put forth, and still continues to put forth, an act of creating power, much more is creating energy displayed in conferring spiritual life, which is of a nature totally distinct from, and infinitely superior to, the other. The latter part of this proposition is founded upon the self-evident principle, that to bestow life or existence, of whatever kind, is an act of creation, and is therefore the prerogative of God alone.

8th. All this is strictly agreeable to the language of Revelation, which uniformly represents the life that Christ conveys to his people or posterity, by faith, as a new creation; hence such phrases as 2 Cor. v. 17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," &c. and that believers are "created in Christ Jesus anew," &c.

9th. To create, is to bestow existence, or to give being to that which formerly wanted it; to improve, is merely to make use of, and better, materials already existing.

10th. It follows from this, that when God speaks of creating a believer anew, he speaks of bestowing upon him an existence of which he was previously destitute, and that those persons who talk or conceive of a believer's being merely *improved*, when he is regenerated, utterly mistake the nature of the subject, and contradict the divine testimony.

11th. It is not meant by all this, that the I, or *person* who existed before conversion, was a *person* different from the I who now exist after conversion, but simply, that the I, or person who was once created naturally, has been the subject of a second or spiritual creation. It is the I, or individual who was created naturally, who is now created spiritually, and not a *person* for the first time, when spiritually created, brought into existence. A new *existence* is created, not a new *individual*.

12th. Sin and holiness, being principles as diametrically opposed to each other as light and darkness, truth and falsehood, can no more mingle with, or be reconciled to each other, than these can, and, therefore, as the believer inherits a completely sinful nature from Adam, and a completely holy nature from Christ, it follows, that these two natures can never be reconciled to, or mixed with each other.

13th. The existence of two such natures in the believer must, one would suppose, be productive of a continual opposition or warfare between them, a supposition which turns out to be matter of fact, if we consult the whole tenor of Scripture, and

especially such passages as these, Gal. v. 17, the 7th of the Romans *passim*, &c.

14th. In all warfare, the parties engaged do not aim at the *improvement*, but at the *subjugation*, if not the *destruction* of each other. This is exemplified in the soul of the believer, where each nature is continually aiming at, and can only be satisfied with, the complete conquest and destruction of the nature opposed to it.

15th. In this warfare, the I, that is the individual who believes, in whatever his individuality may be supposed to consist, or in other words, the new nature, has, and continues to have, the ascendancy, " it being impossible that sin should ever have the dominion over him," &c.

16th. This ascendancy he continues to maintain, in consequence of the blood of Christ, sprinkled upon the conscience by faith, continuing to free him from a sense of guilt.

17th. The spirit of faith in the blood of Christ, possessed by the believer, is also a spirit of holiness.

18th. The new nature in the believer carries on the warfare against the old, or he evinces himself to be possessed of the spirit of holiness, by crucifying the flesh with all its affections and lusts, and by opposing sin in every shape, and of every kind. He mortifies his members which are upon the earth, and he is filled with grief that he cannot do so more effectually.

19th. The flesh, or old nature, carries on the warfare against the spirit, or new nature, by rebelling continually against its motions, inclinations, and desires, and by craving incessantly the indulgence of its own depraved appetites and passions.

20th. The depravity of man has its chief residence in the body, but attaches to all that we derive from the first Adam.

21st. The old and new natures are, in Scripture, denominated the old man and the new man.

22d. The *nature* of the old man is the same in the believer as in the unbeliever, but, from the non-indulgence of its evil appetites and passions, its *strength* is diminished.

23d. Sin in the believer is more hateful to God than in the unbeliever, but it is not imputed to the former, so as to bring him under condemnation, its curse having been borne and taken away, in his stead, by his blessed surety and substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ.

24th. Sin, although in the believer, and proceeding from him, does not, in any respect, spring from, nor is it to be imputed to, the new nature dwelling in him. So far from this being the case, the new nature strives and struggles against it, and is exceedingly annoyed and distressed when the believer in any case gives way to

it, Rom. vii. 17, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

25th. It seems to follow from all this, and is consistent with Scripture, that whatever the believer derives from the first Adam is under condemnation, and that only what he derives from the second Adam is the object of divine approbation and acceptance, Rom. viii. 10, "If Christ be in you, the *body is dead*, because of sin, but the *spirit is life*, because of righteousness."

26th. The old man, or old nature, being thus under condemnation, shall yet be destroyed.

27th. I beg again to state distinctly, that it is not to be inferred from all this, that I maintain the existence of two distinct souls in the believer. On the contrary, the soul, or that wherein the individuality of the person consists, is one and the same, but operated upon, and operating, by means of two distinct sets of principles.

28th. Every person, before, or unless, he believes the Gospel, wanting that divine nature or principle which is conferred and implanted only by faith, of course possesses only the depraved nature which he derived from the first Adam.

V. *The Perseverance of the Saints.*

1st. It being one of the parts of the definition of "Faith in Jesus Christ," that it is saving, that is to say, connected with salvation, of course, he who is possessed of it cannot come short of the heavenly glory.

2d. It is farther implied, that, whatever the individual possessed of this faith may do, he shall persevere to the end. If this is denied, the terms of the supposition are destroyed, and the faith is no longer *saving* faith.

3d. There is a *faith*, which is not *saving*, and of which, although the individual be possessed, he is, after all, a hypocrite, and shall, if he continues devoid of a higher principle, come short of heaven. Of this faith, however, we are not now speaking, the faith in question being *saving faith*.

4th. Man, as he is born into the world, is a thoroughly depraved creature. See Con. of Faith, chap. vi. sec. 2, 3, 4. Jer. xvii. 9. Rom. iii. 10. *et sequen.*

5th. The belief of the gospel, and the hope with which it is accompanied, are purifying and sanctifying principles. Acts xv. 9. 1 John iii. 3.

6th. These two principles, *viz.* thorough depravity, and faith

purifying the heart, subsist together in the believer whilst he is upon earth.

7th. The belief of the truth, or the new nature thereby implanted, has the ascendancy in the believer, controlling, subduing, and crucifying the old nature. Besides, the believer can never again be brought under the reigning power of sin.

8th. The old nature in the believer, is continually stirring and struggling to regain the ascendancy which it once possessed, Rom. vii. 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, Gal. v. 17.

9th. The belief of the truth, as it is in Jesus, is a purifying and overcoming principle, but this truth, like every other, can only operate when present, and in so far as present, to the mind; and therefore, if at any time absent from the mind, that is to say, if entirely or partially forgotten, the believer may fall into sin, or be overtaken by it.

10th. No man who understands the constitution of the human mind, and especially those features of it, *viz.* its inability to attend to more than one object or subject at a time, and the possibility of truths, which appear to it the best established, being for a time absent from the memory, will venture to deny, that even the truth as it is in Jesus may at certain times be forgotten by the believer.

11th. That very grievous sins may, when the truth is forgotten, be fallen into by believers, is proved by the sins of Noah, Abraham, Lot, David, Solomon, &c. under the Old Testament, and of Peter, under the New; besides the gross misconduct of the Corinthian believers, in regard to the Lord's Supper, &c.

12th. The crimes of believers are left upon record, not as encouragements to repeat them, but as warnings to the church of God in every succeeding age, 1 Cor. x. 11, "All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." That is to say, they are intended to remind us, that we have the same thoroughly depraved nature that they had, and that consequently, unless we are on our guard, we are liable to fall into the same sins that they did. It may be farther observed, that this thorough depravity of the believer, and this tendency of his, when off his guard, to fall into sins, even very gross sins, is the foundation of all the warnings and exhortations of our Lord and his disciples, contained in the New Testament.

13th. The criminality of the believer, when he falls into sin, implying the absence of the object of faith from his mind, implies also the absence of assurance of God's love. No believer is assured of his interest in Christ while he is committing sin, no more than he is then living under the purifying influence of the

gospel. But let his mind again be, by the Spirit of God, directed to the object of faith, along with renewed trust in Jesus, there return assurance of his free and unmerited love, deep contrition for past misconduct, and all the other fruits and effects of "faith unfeigned."

14th. The belief of the gospel being in itself a purifying principle, it follows, that no sin whatever can be traced to it, and, therefore, all misconduct on the part of the believer must be traced to some other source. The two grand causes of it appear to be—1st, Imperfect views of the gospel, and 2dly, These imperfectly kept before the mind; whereas, growth in grace, or increasing consistency, stability, and purity in heart, life, and conduct, is chiefly occasioned by, and chiefly consists in, these two things, 1st, Growth in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, or of the gospel, and 2dly, A more habitual looking to Jesus, that is to say, the truth being more constantly present to the mind.

15th. Evil as all sin is in itself, offensive as it is to God, dishonouring as it is to his cause, and injurious as it is to our own souls, it nevertheless happens, that the sins, shortcomings, and inconsistencies of God's people are, like every thing else, overruled by him for good. They furnish them with deeper and more practical views of their own thorough depravity, and instruct them in the necessity of employing greater caution and circumspection in time to come.

16th. Although it certainly savours of repetition, yet that I may not run any risk of being misunderstood, I remark, that the principles which I have just laid down, explain the reason of the numerous cautions and exhortations addressed to believers in Scripture, such as "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." "Be not high minded, but fear." "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." All these exhortations implying, and being founded upon, the thorough depravity of our nature, and the necessity of viligance and circumspection, if we would conduct ourselves aright.

17th. The neglect, on the part of believers, of such cautions and exhortations as those just quoted and referred to, is the cause of their daily and hourly transgressions, and, consequently, of those numerous and oftentimes severe fatherly chastisements, with which they are, according to Scripture and the standards of the Church,* visited; but, upon the supposition of faith being saving, cannot be the cause of God casting them off for ever.

18th. All that has been stated under this head, tends to show

* See Confession of Faith, chap. v. sec. 5, chap. ix. sec. 4, chap. xi. sec. 5, chap. xvii. sec. 3.

how it is that the people of God persevere to the end and are saved. It is not because they do not sin at all, it is not because they do not sometimes fall into very grievous sins, it is not on account of their own free will; but this perseverance of their's depends "upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father, upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace, *from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.*" Confession of Faith, chapter xvii. sec. 2.

VI. *The Evidence of Faith.*

1st. The knowledge or faith of the Gospel, is the principle of divine and spiritual life in the soul, John xvii. 3, 1 John v. 20.

2d. All kinds of life are made manifest, or are proved, by the effects, motions, or actions, that flow from them. Indeed we have no notion of life at all, but as the unseen and hidden source of certain effects. The existence of spiritual life, therefore, can only be ascertained from its effects.

3d. The primary effect of life, and the grand evidence to any being of its possessing it, is, *its consciousness* of possessing it; if this be denied, the certainty of all knowledge, and the foundations of all reasoning, are overturned and destroyed.

4th. It is not denied that the actions which I perform, and the natural functions which I discharge, are, in a certain sense, proofs to me that I am alive. But still, who is the being that takes these proofs into consideration? Is it not I, that is to say, a being conscious of existence previous to my setting about doing so, and who, consequently, know my existence independently of them? Indeed, were any person to take it into his head to inquire at even the most illiterate peasant, "How it is that he knows himself to be alive? and were he to hint to him, that even automata might be brought to perform the same actions that he does," would not the peasant immediately, as the dictate of common sense, refer to his own consciousness of existence, as a first principle, and return some such answer as this, "I am conscious of being alive, I know that I am so; and if you are not satisfied with this, I have no better answer to give you."

5th. Thus does it appear, that the consciousness of existence is a first principle, or instinct, with the importance of which, in repelling puzzling and metaphysical questions, the most illiterate

peasant is as well acquainted as the acutest philosopher. Two remarks may be added: 1st, Although consciousness of existence is a proof, of the most incontrovertible kind, to a man's own mind, it is not a proof that he can communicate to others: and 2dly, There is this obvious difference between the nature of the evidence of his own existence, which a man himself possesses, and that which he can communicate to others, that whereas he himself has a proof, which brings home absolute certainty or assurance to his own mind, he can only communicate proofs to others, which, *however strong*, and however *nearly approaching to certainty*, must always *come short of it*. However unlikely it is, that any should be found ascribing natural life to that which wants it, or denying natural life to that which is possessed of it, still the thing is *possible;* a fact which proves, that the conclusions drawn from external appearances must always be less firm, and less to be relied upon, than those which have consciousness for their basis.

6th. Perhaps the whole of last paragraph may be more briefly and intelligibly expressed, as follows:—The evidence to others, that I am possessed of natural life, is somewhat different from that which I have myself. Others, however accurately they may judge, can only do so from external appearances; in me, however, there exists a consciousness, or instinctive persuasion, of existence, antecedent, and affording to myself a proof superior to all external appearances whatever. This is evinced by my referring to it as an ultimate or incontrovertible principle, although it is a proof that I can afford to nobody besides myself.

7th. The whole of these observations are applicable to spiritual life, with this exception, that as there are fewer possessed *of it*, so there are fewer qualified to judge who those are that *possess it*. The existence of spiritual life in others I can only judge of by external appearances, or by the effects it produces, Matt. vii. 20, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

8th. That I am bringing forth the fruits, and exhibiting the effects of faith, or of the divine life, are likewise to myself proofs that I possess it. First, negatively: Were I not bringing forth the fruits of faith, I could not be a Christian, no more than if I were not breathing and discharging the other functions of natural life, I could be naturally alive. This may afford a very simple test to hypocritical professors, by which to try and ascertain their own characters. Have they peace of conscience? have they joy in the Holy Ghost? and so on. Secondly, positively: 1st. The possession of any, or all of the fruits of faith, shows me that I believe, *e.g.* "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John iii. 14. 2d. These fruits afford likewise the measure of our growth in grace. To

state the matter briefly—the existence of love to God in my bosom, the exhibition of love to the saints, and the bringing forth of the other fruits of the Spirit, are proofs to me that I am a child of God.

9th. This is all true, and all very well. But should any man take it into his head to inquire, "How it is that I know my love to God, and to his saints, to be genuine, and how I come to know that it is the fruits of the Spirit I am bringing forth?—were he to remind me, that many hypocrites and self-deceivers are abroad in the world; that the former can externally imitate the actions of believers so well, as to deceive even the people of God; and that men of the latter description may suppose *that* to be the love of God in their souls, which is in reality an inferior and much more ignoble principle;"—I say, were these questions put, and these things suggested to my mind, it would be necessary for me to look somewhat deeper, and to investigate the matter somewhat farther. It would not do to set about reasoning in a circle, as is very customary in cases of this kind, "How do you know that you love God?" "By keeping his commandments." "Allowing, *argumenti causa*, that it is God's commandments that you keep, how do you know that you keep them from a proper motive?" A thousand chances to one, but the answer to this last question is, "Because I love God;" thus leaving us not one step more advanced than when we set out at first. The business of the believer, in the event of such questions as we have now and previously supposed being put to him, is to find out some general and incontrovertible first principle, which may ascertain to him the genuineness of the apparently spiritual dispositions which he cherishes, and of the fruits springing from them; in other words, his business is to find out that simple principle, which at once, and indubitably, ascertains to him his spiritual life. If such a principle be sought for, it can only be found *in the belief of the gospel*, or in that consciousness of spiritual existence, that witnessing of God's Spirit with the believer's spirit, with which the belief of the gospel is always accompanied;* that is to say, as there is a natural consciousness of natural life, so there is also a spiritual consciousness of spiritual life, equally, if not more infallible than the other, although, like it, evidence only to the believer himself, and incapable of being communicated by him to others. In one word, that peculiar evidence which attends the revelation of mercy contained in the scriptures, at once shows the believer from whom it comes, ascertains him of its truth, and satisfies him that he is a child of God. See HALYBURTON on the reason of faith.

* See the second quotation from Riccaltoun, in the Appendix.

10th. In the same way as natural existence is found in none, without certain effects resulting from it, so neither is spiritual existence, without certain effects resulting from it likewise; and in the same way as no man is conscious of his natural existence, without being at the same time conscious of performing actions, which either do, or might, make that existence apparent to others, so neither is the believer conscious of spiritual existence, without being at the same time conscious of exhibiting certain external proofs of that existence, which are calculated to make it manifest to the spiritually enlightened.

11th. Wherever the truth is believed, there the Spirit of Christ dwells, and wherever the Spirit dwells, there the fruits of the Spirit are brought forth, and wherever either the Spirit, or the fruits of the Spirit, are a wanting, there the man is no believer.

12th. The propriety of the views which I have stated, with regard to the evidence of faith, may be farther evinced in the following way. It is admitted by all Protestant divines of evangelical sentiments, especially by the disciples of the Marrow School, that trust, springing from a sense of God's love to us in particular, either is of the essence of, or, at all events, is necessarily and inseparably connected with, saving faith; that is to say, that the knowledge of our personal interest in the atonement, is necessarily connected with the direct act of believing. This being admitted, let us suppose a man dubious as to whether or not he has believed the Gospel; what, according to this view of matters, is the simplest and speediest way of settling the question? why, evidently a direct act of believing, that is to say, having his mind directed towards, and believing in the atonement; and, supposing his distressing fears again to return, the repetition of the same thing must, according to the views just stated, again settle the matter. The simple import of the directions frequently given, by the divines whose sentiments we are now speaking of, to persons perplexed with a sense of guilt, is, instead of puzzling yourselves with questioning as to whether you have believed formerly or not, believe now, and the point is determined. If this, which is contended for by all divines who hold appropriation to be in saving faith, be not the principle which I have stated in the 9th proposition, under this head,—viz. that the consciousness of believing, and thereby of personal interest, which attends saving faith in the atonement, is the ultimate evidence of faith,—I certainly must confess myself ignorant of the meaning of words.

13th. I would like again to repeat it strongly, that although it is from the object believed in, and the divine consciousness which attends our believing, that assurance of personal interest in Christ is derived, and although this constitutes the ultimate evidence of

faith, yet this assurance is never unaccompanied with the production of the fruits of the Spirit, and wherever these fruits are a wanting, the assurance is spurious, or pretended.

14th. Hence we see, why love to God, and the keeping of his commandments, are proofs of genuine Christianity—no man, it appears, can be conscious of his Christianity, without being at the same time conscious that he is possessed of these proofs; and yet, hence we see the propriety of bearing in mind, that when the question comes to be, as to the genuineness of these apparent proofs, they cannot be made, without a manifest absurdity, to prove themselves, but must have their genuineness ascertained, by tracing them to the principle from which they flow.

15th. All that I have now stated, throws light upon such texts of Scripture as the following:—"To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace," Rom. viii. 6. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," &c. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh," &c. Gal. vi. 7, 8. They alone, in whom a certain character is formed, and who are distinguished for bringing forth certain fruits, shall reach the heavenly glory; but such persons have their characters formed, and their fruits produced, in consequence of possessing a principle of spiritual life, which is antecedent to the formation of these characters, and the production of these fruits, and from which, both character and fruits natively and naturally spring.—See the first article in the Christian Instructor for July last, as exactly expressing my sentiments on the evidence of faith. Many admirable remarks on this subject are contained in the answers of Messrs. BOSTON, HOGG, &c. to the questions proposed to them by the Commission of the General Assembly, 1721.

Want of time prevents me from enlarging on the other charges brought against me; perhaps, however, the principles already laid down, may suffice for the illustration of my views in regard to the points omitted. The fifth charge I have met, in my printed remarks, by referring to the second of Dr. ERSKINE'S Theological Dissertations—this reference I repeat. The Epistles, I do not say, are addressed to the elect, but to those who believe, that is, to all who have believed, all who do believe, and all who yet shall believe. There is undoubtedly a sense in which they are addressed to all to whose ears they come. As a revelation of God's will, the belief of their contents, and obedience to their precepts, are

obligatory upon every human being. But through the unbelief of the great bulk of the human race, the Scriptures in general, and the Epistles in particular, are to them rendered quite unavailing, as it is only by believing the Gospel that they can perceive these Scriptures to be addressed to them, and can become conscious of their obligatory nature.

A similar remark almost applies to the 6th charge. The calls, invitations, and commands of the Gospel are addressed to all to whose ears they come, and it is at their peril they reject them.

The groundwork of the 7th charge, will be found most satisfactorily, and in a way agreeable to my own statements, explained in Mr. GRAY's testimony, page 88, in his observations on Matt. x. 34.

The 8th charge is altogether erroneous. So far from inculcating that no preparation was necessary, previous to appearing at the Lord's table, I enforced such preparation, and pointed out the dangerous consequences that would follow from neglecting it.

As to the 9th and last charge, I add nothing to what is contained in my printed statement.

Such is the nature of the case submitted to the Reverend Presbytery. It is hoped that the members, enlightened by the word, and guided by the Spirit of God, will be led to pronounce such a decision, as shall be most for his glory, and best fitted to promote the interests of his church.

D. THOM.

LIVERPOOL,
9th September, 1825.

APPENDIX.

From Riccaltoun's Works, alluded to in my remarks on Faith, proposition 2d. Vol. ii. page 188.

"When one has said that the faith, or believing, so much spoken of in the Record, and which bears such weight in the Christian life, is the very same which is so well known in common life, he has said all that can be said for clearing the nature of it. The meanest peasant knows better what it is to believe, than the most learned philosopher can define it. It can be known only by experience. It is an inward sense, which none can know any thing of but they who feel it; *and never was any man at a loss to know when he believed, and when not, unless he had been somehow carried out of the plain natural road, and made to imagine that faith is something he knows not what, nor how it is to be performed.*"

Equally admirable are the following remarks, from page 189 of the same volume.

"And therefore it must be observed, that the facts recorded there are not matters of pure speculation, for the improvement of our minds, but benefactions and promises, which demand suitable acknowledgments for the benefits already received, and dependance on the promiser's faithfulness for what is farther promised. This is well known among men, by the terms of *trusting* or *depending* on another's word. And to talk of believing a promise which does not imply this, is really talking contradictions; and to say we believe the promise perfectly, when we entertain any doubt or wavering about the performance of it, is very little better. *Just so much full assurance as there is of the truth and faithfulness of the promise, so much assured confidence will there be in God; and so much as there is of this confidence, so much faith, and no more.* So that there can hardly be a grosser mistake than what many indulge themselves in, that their want of assurance is their unhappiness, but not their sin. Just so much of doubting as there is mixed with faith, so much is there of unbelief, and in proportion to that, so much there is of suspicion and jealousy that God may be a liar, or, at least, that his faithfulness may fail, which is nearly allied to it."

Let these admirably clear and distinct sentiments be compared with Mr. GRAY'S evidence, particularly at the bottom of page 91, and top of page 92, of the Proof.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

It was originally my intention to have made some alterations upon the foregoing Memorial. The hurry with which it was drawn up, and printed,—the manuscript having been actually sent off to Glasgow, for publication, without being revised,—seemed imperatively to demand this. But as my principal object in re-publishing the piece, was to make an appeal to the public as to the justice of the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery, it struck me, that however requisite alterations might be, I could not, in fairness to that body, allow myself to make them. The Memorial, therefore, goes forth to the world with all its disadvantages on its head.

To this note I have subjoined the sentence of the Presbytery, and have only to add, that the Memorial was in the hands of each of the Members eight days before that sentence was pronounced.

D. THOM.

Liverpool, 13th October, 1825.

SENTENCE OF THE PRESBYTERY.

"The Presbytery having deliberated on the case of the Rev. DAVID THOM at great length, and given their opinion thereon, Find, with the deepest concern, that Mr. THOM has, during his ministry at Liverpool, in his discourses from the pulpit, asserted, maintained, and inculcated several gross errors, which strike at the vitals of religion, are contrary to, and inconsistent with, the Word of God, The Confession of Faith, and Catechisms of this National Church, as said errors are set forth in the Petition of JOHN M'CULLOCH and others, and referred by parties to the decision of this Presbytery. That the Petitioners have proved each article of charge in their petition; and that Mr. THOM has failed in his exculpation:

Wherefore the Presbytery, after full and mature consideration of the whole of this very important reference, did, and hereby do, find and declare, that Mr. THOM has contravened his solemn engagements as a licensed Probationer, and ordained Minister of the Church of Scotland, failed to perform his part of the stipulations in the Bond to him by the Trustees of the Scotch, or St. Andrew's Church, Rodney-street, Liverpool, of date 18th April, 1823, on the faith of which he was ordained by this Presbytery to be their Minister, and forfeited the provisions and stipulations made by said Bond in his favour. The Presbytery therefore did, and hereby do, declare the said Mr. DAVID THOM to be deprived of the Ministry of said Church from this date."

Liverpool:—Printed for C. Gray, Bookseller, Paradise-street;
by D. Marples, 69, Circus-street.

Duke University Libraries
D04351503L

1526